

DRAFT

PROSPECTUS

**The Transportation Planning Process of the
Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization**

January 2008

PREPARED BY

ROCKINGHAM PLANNING COMMISSION
156 WATER STREET
EXETER, NEW HAMPSHIRE



This document was prepared by the Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization, under contract to the New Hampshire Department of Transportation, in cooperation with the Federal Transit Administration and the Federal Highway Administration of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

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RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE PROSPECTUS FOR THE ROCKINGHAM PLANNING COMMISSION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO).

WHEREAS, the PROSPECTUS has been developed to define and delineate organizational responsibilities, bylaws and operating procedures, and a summary of the planning program; and

WHEREAS, the PROSPECTUS establishes the multi-year framework within which the Unified Planning Work Program for transportation planning in the Rockingham MPO Study Area is accomplished; and

WHEREAS, the responsibilities for cooperatively carrying out the urban transportation planning process are defined in the PROSPECTUS and via executed agreements or memorandum of understanding incorporated into the PROSPECTUS;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Rockingham Planning Commissions adopts the PROSPECTUS dated October 10, 2007; and as amended.

The undersigned hereby certifies that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution, adopted at legally convened meeting of the Rockingham Planning Commission held on the following date:

For Rockingham Planning Commission

Date:

Theodore Tocci
Chair

For New Hampshire Department of Transportation

Charles P. O'Leary
Commissioner

RECORD OF AMENDMENTS

Section (s)

**Date Adopted
Amendment**

ALL

Initial Adoption

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
CAAA	Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CMAQ	Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality Program
COAST	Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation
CTPP	Census Transportation Planning Package
DBE/WBE	Disadvantaged Business Enterprises/Women's Business Enterprises
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
FY	Fiscal Year
GACIT	Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation
GIS	Geographic Information System
HPMS	Highway Performance Monitoring System
HPR	Highway Planning and Research Funds
ISTEA	Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991
KACTS	Kittery Area Comprehensive Transportation Study
MVPC	Merrimack Valley Planning Commission
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MSA	Metropolitan Statistical Area
MVRTA	Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority
NHDES	New Hampshire Department of Employment Security
NHDOT	New Hampshire Department of Transportation
PDA	Pease Development Authority
P-D-R	Portsmouth-Dover-Rochester
PL	Planning Funds Administered by FHWA
RPA	Regional Planning Agency
RPC	Rockingham Planning Commission
RTAP	Rural Technical Assistance Program
SAFETEA-LU	Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – Legacy for Users (2005)
SIP	State Implementation Plan (for Air Quality Conformity)
SMRPC	Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission
SRPC	Strafford Regional Planning Commission
STIP	State Transportation Improvement Program
STP	Surface Transportation Program
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
TAZ	Traffic Analysis Zone
TDM	Transportation Demand Management
TEA21	Transportation Equity Act for the 21 st Century
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
UNH	University of New Hampshire
UPWP	Unified Planning Work Program
UZA	Urbanized Area
3Cs	Continuing, Comprehensive, and Cooperative Transportation Planning

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Prospectus serves three important functions in the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) regional transportation planning process. First, it provides an overview of the Federally mandated "3C" (comprehensive, continuing, cooperative) transportation planning process as defined by the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century of 1998 (TEA-21), and the Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act – Legacy for Users of 2005 (SAFETEA-LU). Second, it defines the roles and responsibilities of the various Federal, State and local agencies and entities involved in the MPO transportation planning process. Third, it documents the interagency agreements that have been or will be entered into between the MPO, the NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT), the Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation (COAST), the Cooperative Alliance for Regional Transportation (CART) and the Air Resources Division of NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES). These agreements further define the specific responsibilities and obligations of each agency.

The Prospectus is designed to serve as a common reference for all parties interested and involved in the regional transportation planning process in the RPC region of New Hampshire. It spells out how that process will be implemented by the Rockingham MPO.

The remainder of the document is divided into five sections, as follows:

- Designation & Description of the Rockingham MPO;
- Overview of the transportation planning process;
- Description of roles and responsibilities of the involved agencies;
- Summary of the required elements of transportation planning under ISTEA and 23 CFR 450C (the Federal rules for "Metropolitan Transportation Planning and Programming").
- Process and procedures to be used by the MPO and partner agencies in developing and amending the Long-Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program;
- Establishment of the public involvement procedures that will be used throughout the planning and programming process.

In addition, the Appendices to the document contain copies of draft Memoranda of Understanding which define specific agency obligations in carrying out the planning process.

2.0 ROCKINGHAM METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

2.1 Designation

On July 21, 2007 Governor John Lynch designated the Rockingham Planning Commission as the MPO responsible for implementing the 3C's transportation planning process within the Commission's designated study area. The MPO area includes the communities within the New Hampshire portions of the Portsmouth-Kittery NH-Maine urbanized area (UZA) and New Hampshire portion of the Boston urbanized area¹. The Rockingham MPO is the result of a realignment and redesignation of the former Seacoast MPO and Salem-Plaistow-Windham MPO. This redesignation became permissible under

¹ The Town of Pelham is within the New Hampshire portion of the Boston urbanized area but is covered by the Nashua MPO

Federal MPO designation rules following the 2000 Census when the former Portsmouth-Dover-Rochester NH-ME urbanized area was split into the Dover-Rochester NH-ME UZA and the Portsmouth-Kittery NH-ME UZA. The subsequent redesignation was carried out in order to align the MPO boundaries with those of the Strafford Regional Planning Commission and Rockingham Planning Commission respectively, and thereby to consolidate transportation planning with the other regional planning functions of the Commissions.

While the Rockingham MPO was newly established in 2007, the relevant parts of existing planning and programming documents and studies, including this Prospectus, the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), the regional travel demand model and air quality conformity analyses from the two predecessor MPOs have been inherited by the new MPO. These documents have served as the starting point for newly adopted versions which are aligned with the new MPO boundaries.

These study area and structure of the Rockingham MPO are further defined below. See Appendix D for further information and documentation pertaining to the MPO designation and the redesignation process.

2.2 Study Area

As noted above, the Rockingham MPO study area is the result of the combination of the communities included in the former Salem-Plaistow-Windham MPO and the RPC portion of the Seacoast MPO. The two sets together represent the State-defined planning district of the Rockingham Planning Commission as it has existed since 1982. Figure 1 shows the Rockingham Planning Commission/Rockingham MPO Study Area and the associated urbanized and non-urbanized area communities.

Former Seacoast MPO communities (18): Brentwood, East Kingston, Epping, Exeter, Fremont, Greenland, Hampton, Hampton Falls, Kensington, New Castle, Newfields, Newington, North Hampton, Portsmouth, Rye, Seabrook, South Hampton, and Stratham.

Former Salem-Plaistow-Windham MPO communities (9): Atkinson, Danville, Hampstead, Kingston, Newton, Plaistow, Salem, Sandown and Windham.

According to the urbanized area boundaries drawn subsequent to the 2000 Census, all of the communities within the former Salem-Plaistow-Windham MPO contain at least some portion of urbanized area. Of the 18 communities formerly in the Seacoast MPO, 10 contain urbanized areas: Portsmouth, New Castle, Newington, Greenland, Rye, No. Hampton, Hampton, Hampton Falls, Seabrook and Exeter. The latter three of these are defined as part of the Boston area; the others are within the Portsmouth UZA area.

2.3 Representation and Structure

The Rockingham MPO consists of the MPO Policy Committee and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The Policy Committee consists of the regular appointed Commissioners to the RPC, an appointed representative from any non-member community, and representatives for other participating agencies as established in Table 1. The general structure of the MPO is shown in Figure 2. Functional responsibilities of these three committees and the other agencies and participants which play a role in the planning process are discussed below.

A. MPO Policy Committee

The MPO Policy Committee is charged with providing policy level recommendations, approvals and

endorsements of the Rockingham MPO concerning transportation issues that have a bearing on the MPO's continued, comprehensive, and coordinated transportation planning process. This includes but is not limited to activities such as:

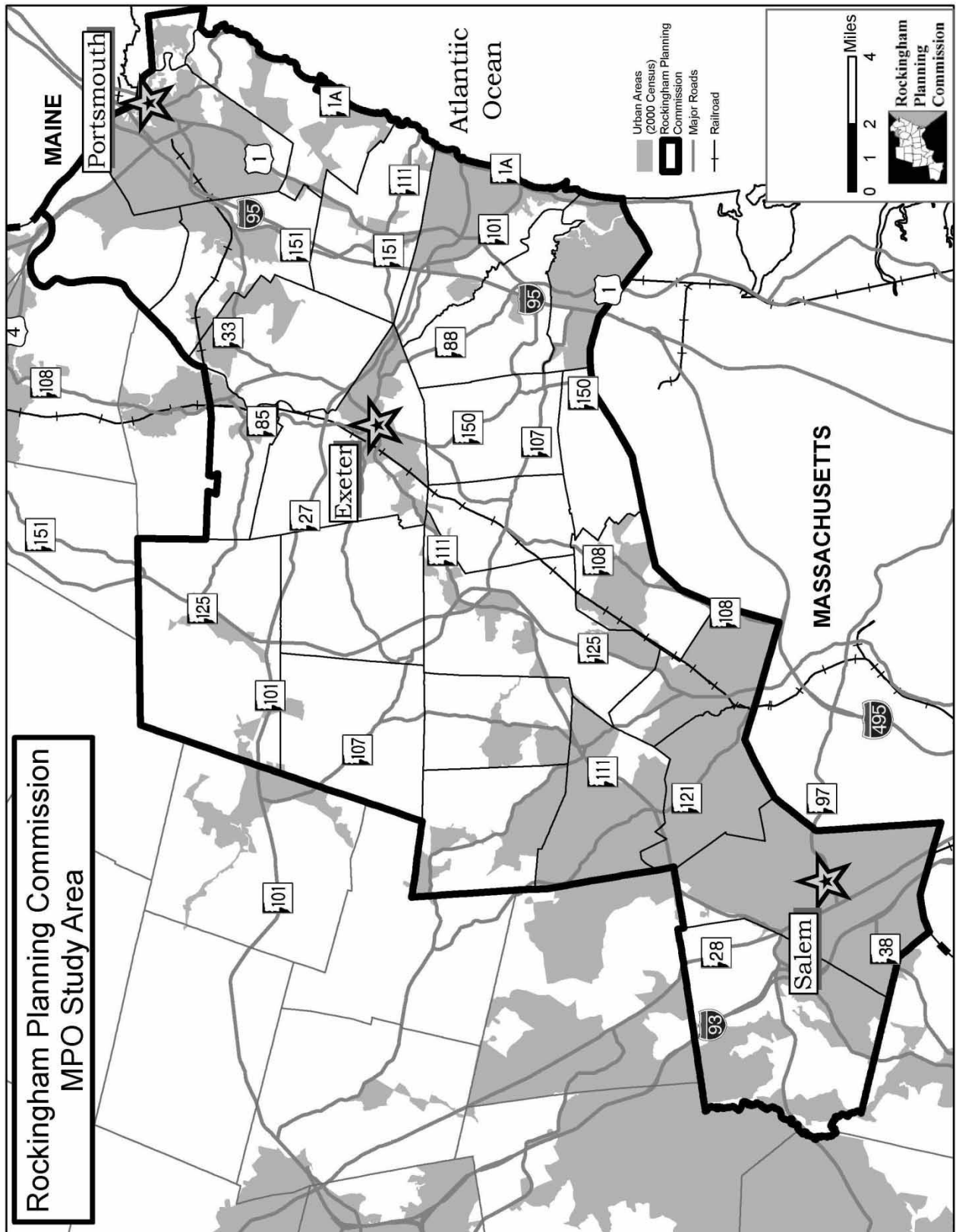
1. Establishing the policy direction of the MPO through its adopted plans and policy statements;
2. In cooperation with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT), establishing procedures and requirements whereby Section 112 (PL) and FTA Section 5303 (Metropolitan Transit Planning) funds will be allocated and made available.
3. Adopting and amending the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), the Long Range Transportation Plan, and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP);
4. Reviewing and commenting on individual projects, programs, plans, and reports relative to the adopted transportation policies and positions;
5. Reviewing and endorsing technical reports and studies prepared by the MPO staff or consultants;
6. Ensuring compliance with the provisions of the Clean Air Act Amendment of 1990 by making conformity determinations for MPO TIPs and MPO transportation plans, with assistance from NHDOT.
7. Adopting and/or revising plans, policies and findings recommended by the Technical Advisory Committee, including technical reports and memoranda;
8. Providing a mechanism to facilitate and broaden public involvement in transportation planning and decision making processes.

Voting membership on the Policy Committee includes Planning Commission board members (local representatives appointed in accordance with RSA 36:46) plus representatives appointed by the NHDOT, NHDES (Air Resources Division), COAST, CART, the Pease Development Authority, and RPC non-member communities. Non-voting members include federal transportation agency representatives, neighboring MPOs/RPCs, non-public transportation providers, and other state and federal transportation officials and other participants. Table 1 provides a detailed listing of the Policy Committee and Technical Advisory Committee membership broken down by voting and non-voting status.

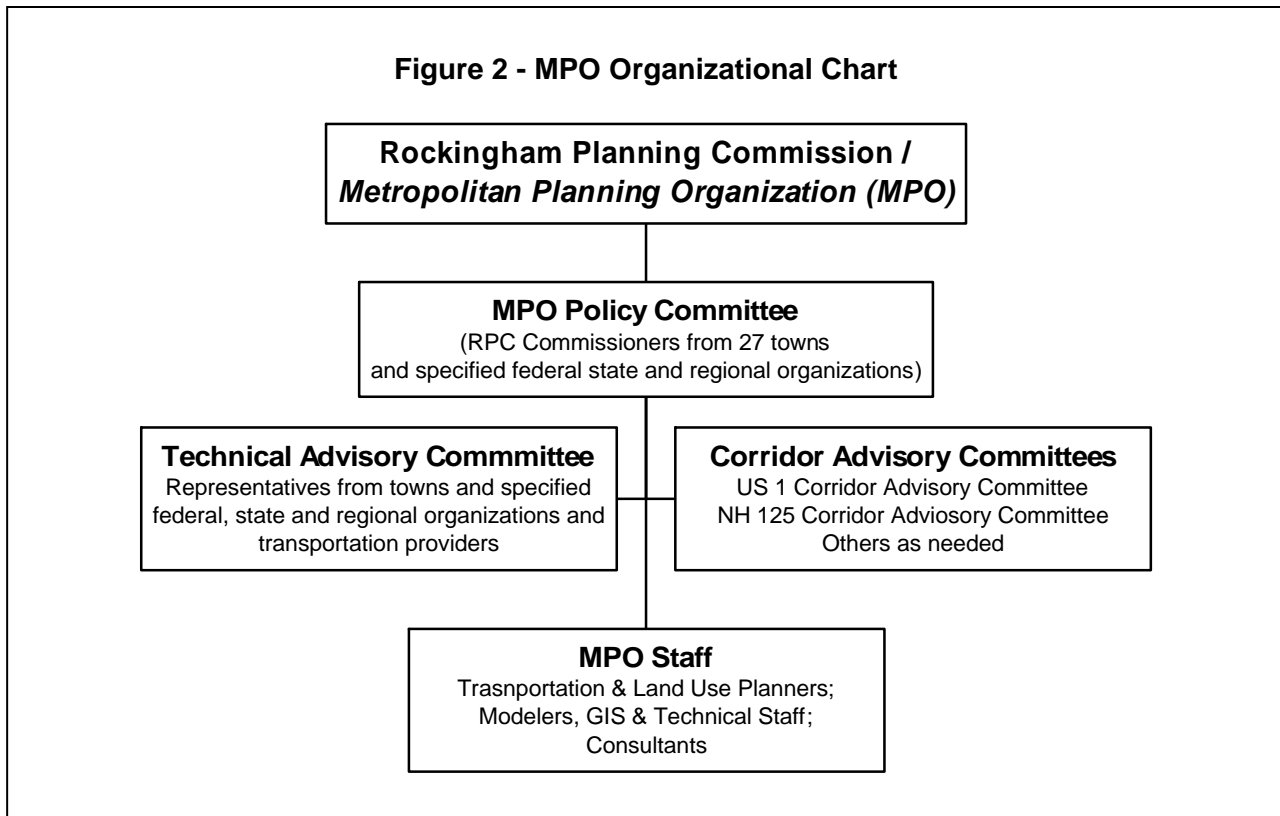
B. MPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is established by the Policy Committee as a standing committee of the MPO. The main purposes of the TAC are (1) to provide technical guidance and recommendations to the RPC staff and the Policy Committee concerning transportation issues that have a bearing on the MPO's 3C's planning process, (2) to review major work products prepared by staff as part of the transportation planning program, (3) to provide a forum for individual members to bring transportation related issues and concerns to the attention of the MPO staff and Policy Committee, (4) to advise the staff and Policy Committee on major transportation issues in the region. The TAC does not establish policies for the MPO, but may make both technical and policy recommendations to the organization.

Figure 1 - MPO STUDY AREA



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Membership on the MPO TAC includes representatives from the Study Area member and non-member communities plus RPC, NHDOT, NHDES, COAST, CART, Pease Development Authority, and other state and federal transportation officials and other participants. See Table 1.

C. MPO Staff

The Rockingham MPO staff consists of the transportation planning and support staff of the Rockingham Planning Commission. The MPO staff has the major responsibility for the preparation and maintenance of the MPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and supporting documents, studies and other work products as may be defined in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Other agencies in the 3C's process provide input and/or have responsibilities for performing specific tasks as determined by memoranda of understanding (see Appendix B). Other responsibilities of the MPO staff include:

1. To compile a two-year Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) specifying the work to be accomplished, staff required and estimated costs for each participating agency;
2. To prepare and maintain the twenty-year Long Range Transportation Plan for the MPO study area;
3. To prepare and maintain the four-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the MPO study area;
4. To conduct research and prepare various planning studies as necessary to carry out the

MPO planning process;

5. With the assistance of NHDOT, NHDES, and the other MPOs, prepare air quality conformity determinations for the Plans and TIPs adopted by the MPO to ensure that they comply with the requirements of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990;
6. To provide technical assistance to municipalities in conducting local transportation studies and transportation planning;
7. To provide public information regarding the transportation planning program in the MPO study area; and
8. To ensure coordination of transportation planning with local, state and federal agencies various agencies.

3.0 OVERVIEW OF THE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS

3.1 The "3Cs" Process

The "3C" transportation planning process was jointly developed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA, now the Federal Transit Administration) in the early 1970's to ensure that effective, coordinated multi-modal transportation planning and project implementation would be conducted on a nationwide basis. Large scale highway construction which occurred during the 1950s and 1960s often had serious negative and unanticipated impacts on the communities they were intended to serve, and on the environment. These problems were exacerbated by the fact that citizens were not adequately informed as to the consequences of these projects, nor afforded the ability to provide input into their identification or planning.

In response to these problems, the FHWA and FTA jointly developed the "3C" transportation planning process. It was designed to ensure that the process would be continuing, meaning that both long and short term transportation issues are identified and considered on an ongoing basis; cooperative, meaning that effective coordination among all public officials is maintained and that other public and private parties are included in the process; and comprehensive, meaning that all modes of transportation, as well as non-transportation elements such as land use, economic and environmental issues were considered in the planning process.

To implement this policy, states were empowered to create Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO's), comprised of both local and state agencies and charged with implementing the 3Cs process and with insuring that a cooperative decision-making process was in place in urban areas.

The importance of MPO's was strengthened by ISTEA, and its successors, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA21) and the current Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). Under these laws and their implementing Rules, MPO's have a greater role and responsibility in programming highway and transit projects. They direct MPOs to develop comprehensive, project specific and financially realistic ("constrained") transportation plans with a minimum 20 year horizon which form the basis or framework for addressing transportation needs in the region.

The planning process involves a coordinated, cooperative and comprehensive effort among local, regional, state, and federal agencies. Section 4 of this document discusses the functional responsibilities of each agency involved in the process.

**TABLE 1
MPO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

<u>TRANSPORTATION POLICY COMMITTEE</u>	<u>TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE</u>
Voting Members	Voting Members
NHDOT Planning Bureau or Commissioner designee NHDOT Rail & Transit or Commissioner designee NHDES - Air Resources Division Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation (COAST) Cooperative Alliance for Regional Transportation (CART) Pease Development Authority University of new Hampshire Municipalities**:	NHDOT – Planning Bureau NHDOT – District VI NHDES - Air Resources Division COAST CART Pease Development Authority Rockingham Planning Commission (staff) Member Municipalities (1 per community) University of New Hampshire
(No. of reps determined by RSA 36:41) Atkinson (2) Brentwood (2) Danville (2) E. Kingston (2) Epping (2) Exeter (3) Fremont (2) Greenland (2) Hampstead (2) Hampton (3) Hampton Falls (2) Kensington (2) Kingston (2) New Castle (2) Newfields (2) Newington (2) Newton (2) No. Hampton (2) Plaistow (2) Portsmouth (4) Rye (2) Salem (4) Sandown(2) Seabrook (2) So. Hampton (2) Stratham (2) Windham (3)	Non-Voting Members
** non dues paying-members to the RPC are entitled to 1 voting representative	Non-member Municipalities Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Federal Transit Administration (FTA) NHDOT - Aeronautics Division NHDOT – Bureau of Rail and Transit University of New Hampshire (Wildcat) New Hampshire Office of Energy & Planning Strafford Regional Planning Commission Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission Merrimack Valley Planning Commission Nashua Regional Planning Commission So. NH Planning Commission Maine Department of Transportation Massachusetts Department of Transportation Federal Aviation Administration Federal Railroad Administration Intercity Bus Operator – I-95 Corridor Intercity Bus Operator – I-93 Corridor Pan Am Railways
Non-Voting Members	
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Federal Transit Administration (FTA) NHDOT - Aeronautics Division NHDOT - District VI University of New Hampshire (Wildcat) New Hampshire Office of Energy & Planning Strafford Regional Planning Commission Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission Merrimack Valley Planning Commission Nashua Regional Planning Commission So. NH Planning Commission Maine Department of Transportation Massachusetts Department of Transportation Federal Aviation Administration Federal Railroad Administration No. New England Passenger Rail Authority	

3.2 Unified Planning Work Program

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) provides detailed descriptions of those planning activities and tasks to be pursued over the course of two fiscal years, along with a budget to fund the work effort. The UPWP identifies for each task, a description of the proposed activities, the actual products which will be prepared, funding sources, functional responsibility of each agency, staffing required, and estimated staff costs. The document also identifies the major planning priorities facing the region and relate those priorities to the work program proposed.

Per the requirements of the Metropolitan Planning Rules (23 CFR 450), the UPWP must be developed in cooperation with the State and with COAST and CART, the publicly designated transit operators in the region which are facilitating the development of a multi-modal transportation system for the region.

3.3 Long Range Transportation Plan

The Rockingham MPO Long Range Transportation Plan is the basis for identifying and implementing transportation needs and improvements in the region. It is intended to serve both as a policy setting document for transportation planning and the source from which specific transportation projects are identified, prioritized and selected for funding. The format of the Plan was substantially revised in 1994 following the passage of ISTEA to be project specific, to include an analysis of financial constraint, and to incorporate an air quality conformity determination, per requirement of the Metropolitan Planning Rules. TEA-21 and SAFETEA-LU further modified the requirements for the Long Range Transportation Plan and adjustments have been made accordingly. SAFETEA-LU requires that the Long Range Plan be updated at least every four years and maintain a minimum 20 year planning horizon and an updated 20-year Long Range Project List. The Plan is subject to an air quality conformity Determination which is made at the time of adoption or amendment.

The RPC MPO Long Range Transportation Plan incorporates the Transportation Improvement Program as the short range project specific element of the Plan. While a part of the Plan, the TIP is amended more frequently and therefore is also maintained as a stand alone document.

The Long Range Plan is separate and distinct from the State 10 Year Plan, which is established and mandated under state law. To the extent possible, the project specific elements of the MPO Long range Plan are made consistent with the currently approved 10 Year Plan.

3.4 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a staged multi-year program of regional transportation improvement projects. As noted above, prior to 1995, the MPO maintained the TIP as a separate document. In order to streamline the planning and programming of transportation projects and to ensure

consistency between short and long range project elements, the MPO has combined the Plan and TIP into one document, with the TIP becoming the short-range transportation improvement chapter of the Plan. The consolidated document is now referred to as the Long Range Plan and TIP. However, because the TIP is subject to frequent amendments it is maintained as a separate physical document.

The TIP must be updated and readopted at least every four years; however, for the purpose of synchronizing its development with the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) the MPO's TIP is normally updated and readopted at least every biannually, in the even numbered years. The TIP portion of the Plan describes those financially-constrained projects which are proposed for implementation. The first two years of the TIP consist of the list of projects which have been selected for funding, as jointly agreed upon by the MPO and the NHDOT. Only those projects that are selected for the first three years are subject to the air quality determination (see Appendix D). In the normal course of events, as the first two years are implemented, the financially-constrained projects listed in the third year become first year projects during the next biennial update.

No transportation project utilizing Federal transportation funds (Title 23 or FTA funds) may be implemented in the Rockingham MPO region unless it is part of an approved, conforming TIP.

3.5 Plan and Program Implementation

Implementation of the Transportation Plan occurs primarily through the construction, organization or other realization of the projects included in the short-range chapter of the Plan/TIP. It also occurs in other forms, including the adoption of policies by the municipalities and the regional planning commissions through the actions of cooperating agencies and organizations such as COAST, CART, PDA and the NHDOT. It is in the implementation process that the TIP links the plans of the MPO with changes in the transportation system. Simply put, the TIP is the short-range chapter of the Plan, and is the major implementing mechanism for the Plan. Other mechanisms include implementation of local plans, projects and land use regulation consistent with the plan, as well as implementation of regional and state level plans and projects recommended the plan.

3.6 Transportation Planning and Air Quality Conformity

The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 placed requirements on the transportation planning process designed to ensure that transportation plans and programs developed by MPO's contribute to, and not detract from, the goal of reaching national ambient air quality standards. The law's key mechanism in this regard is to require that all Plans and TIPs adopted by the MPO be found, through a quantitative analysis of the specific projects proposed, to contribute to a reduction in mobile source emissions. All of the RPC communities are included within the Boston-Manchester-Portsmouth (Southeast) New Hampshire moderate ozone nonattainment area under the 8 hour ozone standard (see **Figure 3**). The NHDES, NHDOT and MPOs within the non-attainment area are working cooperatively to demonstrate attainment with the 8 hour Ozone standard by June of 2010 as required by the State Implementation Plan for Air Quality Attainment (SIP). This demonstration must be inclusive of growth in development and automobile VMT occurring in the region. Since mobile source (motor vehicles) accounts for between 55% and 60% of ozone related emissions in New Hampshire, it expected that mobile source emissions reduction will carry a major portion of the burden in reaching attainment. For this reason, the impact of proposed short and long-term changes to the transportation system (as expressed in the Plan and TIP) must be carefully reviewed to ensure they will contribute to emissions reductions. Since the attainment area is shared across four MPOs, air quality conformity review process requires extensive coordination. This review and coordination between agencies occurs via the interagency consultation process which involves periodic meetings of representatives from FHWA, FTA, EPA, NHDOT, NHDES, MPOs and the RPCs to review and discuss projects to help determine air quality impacts, regional significance, and amendment type and status for the TIP.

Any changes that will potentially trigger conformity are discussed and explored by the participating agencies through the interagency consultation process allowing potential impacts to be identified early in the revision process.

If a proposed revision to the Long Range Plan or TIP will impact the existing air quality analysis, it is considered an amendment to the Plan or TIP and will require a new or amended air quality conformity determination. The amended TIP, Plan and affirmative conformity finding must be submitted to FHWA/FTA for approval. If the proposed revision to the STIP does not affect the existing air quality analysis, but triggers a determination of conformity for other reasons, it must be explicitly reflected in the amendment with a statement that the finding of conformity is being based on the existing air quality analysis. The process and agency responsibilities to be adhered to in conformity determinations are specifically defined in the New Hampshire Transportation Conformity administrative rules (PART Env-A 1501 TRANSPORTATION CONFORMITY).

4.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF INVOLVED AGENCIES

4.1 Rockingham Planning Commission

The Rockingham Planning Commission has been designated by the Governor as the MPO for its planning regions and as such is responsible for carrying out the 3Cs metropolitan transportation planning process as described in Section 3 of this document. When acting as the MPO the Rockingham Planning Commission meets as the MPO Policy Committee and expands its membership to include additional members as described in Section 2 and listed in Table 1. The MPO Policy Committee is responsible for reviewing and approving all MPO transportation related documents including the UPWP, this Prospectus, Long Range Transportation Plan and TIP, and special studies including corridor plans, transit plans and others.

In addition, the RPC acts a “host” to the MPO by providing organizational, administrative and professional planning staff to carryout. The Commission is reimbursed for 80% to 90% of these services from federal and state funds as determined by formula agreed to under the biennial UPWP agreement with the NHDOT. From 10% to 20% of the cost of these services are paid from local sources as raised through the Commission’s annual dues assessment to its member communities. Depending on size of community, between 35% and 65% of local dues assessed to each community is used for MPO support on a per capita basis.

4.2 Local Communities

Each of the communities within the Rockingham Planning Commission region are provided the opportunity to participate in the MPO transportation planning process through direct representation on the TAC and Policy Committees. The communities' role on the TAC is to represent and bring forward local project level transportation needs and priorities and to provide technical guidance to the MPO staff. Their role on the Policy Committee is to review, evaluate and approve or disapprove the major MPO policy documents, principally the Prospectus, Work Program (UPWP), Transportation Plan and TIP, and Transportation

Studies, and in so doing, represent the short and long-range needs of both their community and the region overall. Both TAC and Policy Committee members have the critical responsibility to ensure ongoing communication between the MPO and the local officials in the community. In exchange for these services and benefits, communities are assessed and expected to provide a share of the local match (from 10% to 20%) of the cost of carrying out the UPWP, including maintaining the MPO process. Communities which do not contribute their share of local match are afforded non-voting membership status on the TAC and a single voting representative on the Policy Committee.

4.3 NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT)

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) has statutory authority under New Hampshire law to plan, design, build, and maintain state highways and public transportation facilities of the state. The NHDOT maintains administrative oversight and funding of the responsibilities for MPO planning process, and the authority in regions outside of federally designated Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) to select eligible transportation projects for implementation through the STIP. In addition, the NHDOT is represented on the MPO Policy Committee and TAC and has a wide range of responsibilities with respect to the MPO transportation planning program including: infrastructure construction; data collection; air quality analysis support; preparation of special studies and providing advice and technical assistance to the MPO. The NHDOT also has specific responsibilities with respect to the MPO transportation planning process. These responsibilities are defined in the Memorandum of Understanding between the Seacoast MPO and the NHDOT (See Appendix B).

4.4 NHDES - Air Resources Division.

Through its representative on the Technical Advisory and Policy Committees, the Air Resources Division will apprise the MPO of the status of the State Implementation Plan and State regulations pertaining to air quality conformity. Additional responsibilities of the Air Resources Division include reviewing air quality conformity determinations prior to FHWA approval and providing comments on Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) projects. and such other responsibilities as defined in the New Hampshire Transportation Conformity administrative rules (PART Env-A 1501 TRANSPORTATION CONFORMITY – See **Appendix C**). In part to fulfill the intent of these rules the Division actively participates in the Interagency Consultation Group with regards to conformity issues. In addition, the Air Resources Division will work cooperatively with the MPO in identifying and developing transportation projects which improve air quality, including Transportation Control Measure (TCM) projects which may be considered in future revisions to the SIP. TCM projects that are incorporated in the SIP will be given a high priority for implementation by the MPO.

4.5 Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation (COAST).

COAST is the regional public transit operator in the eastern portion of the MPO region, as established under special purpose legislation which provides both fixed route and demand responsive transit service in the Seacoast area. The COAST service area consists of the urbanized areas of Stafford County as well as Portsmouth Urbanized area in Rockingham County. COAST is represented on the Rockingham MPO via both the TAC and the MPO Policy Committees. In addition, the RPC has a designated seat on the COAST Board of Directors. COAST is responsible for providing input, including the identification of transit needs and objectives, into the development of the Long Range Transportation Plan including its Transit Plan component and other relevant documents, as well as identification of shorter term project need for inclusion in the TIP. COAST is also responsible for

providing operational and financial data for the MPO to use in developing its required certifications. With the passage of SAFETEA-LU, COAST is also responsible, in consultation with the MPO, for the development of a Human Services Transportation Plan for its service area. The MPO provides COAST with planning services as requested as identified and funded through the UPWP. The MPO is required to certify each year that COAST has the financial capacity to continue to operate at its planned level of service and that it is planning for capital replacement needs. The MPO must also annually certify that the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Plan adopted by COAST is consistent with the MPO Transportation Plan. (See **Appendix B-1**)

4.6 Cooperative Alliance for Regional Transportation (CART).

CART is presently in the process of becoming designated regional public transit operator in the western portion of the MPO region. CART was established by special purpose legislation in 2005 and is expected to receive FTA certification as a designated recipient of FTA grant funds in 2008. CART operates as a transportation brokerage agency for human services agencies in its service area as well as provider of demand-response transit services. Implementation of limited fixed route transit services is expected to begin in 2009. CART is represented on the MPO via both the TAC and the MPO Policy Committees. The RPC is also represented on the CART Board of Directors. Once CART is certified as a designated recipient, the roles and responsibilities of CART with respect to the MPO will in all other respects be the same as described for COAST and will be the subject of a memorandum of understanding between the MPO and CART.

4.7 Kittery Area Comprehensive Transportation Study/Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission

In 1982, the Governor of the State of Maine designated the Kittery Area Comprehensive Transportation Study (KACTS) as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to be responsible together with the State for transportation planning in the Maine portion of the Portsmouth-Dover-Rochester urbanized area. KACTS is comprised of the following municipalities and agencies: Kittery, Eliot, South Berwick, Berwick, Lebanon, Southern Maine RPC, and Maine DOT. Southern Maine RPC (SMRPC) staffs the MPO.

The SMRPC serves as a non-voting member of the MPO Policy Committee and TAC. Similarly, the RPC is included as non-voting members of the KACTS Policy and TAC committees in order to facilitate coordination across state boundaries in both highway and transit planning. In addition, Maine municipalities served by COAST are represented on the COAST board of directors to ensure good communications across state boundaries.

4.8 Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC)

South of the MPO in the Merrimack Valley region in Massachusetts, the MPO consists of the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC), the Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority (MVRTA), the Massachusetts Department of Public Works (MDPW), and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Construction (EOTC). This partnership is designed to ensure participation of local communities, public transit providers and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in the planning process.

As with SMRPC, the MVPC serves as a non-voting member of the Seacoast MPO Policy Committee and TAC, and has the responsibility to represent their MPO's transportation needs and priorities and to

provide overall technical and policy level guidance to the MPO staff. It is the intent of both MPO's to coordinate their transportation planning activities on an ongoing basis.

4.9 New Hampshire MPOs (NRPC, SNHPC, SRPC/SMPO)

In addition to the adjoining MPOs in Massachusetts and Maine, the Rockingham MPO is bounded by three MPOs in New Hampshire: the Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization (SMPO) to the north, the Southern NH Planning Commission (SNHPC) to west and the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) to the southwest. Together the four agencies constitute all of the MPOs in the state; and in addition they encompass the entire New Hampshire non-attainment area. As with SMRPC and MVPC, the NRPC, SNHPC and SMPO each have non-voting representation on the Rockingham MPO Policy Committee and TAC and in those venues each has the opportunity to apprise the MPO, and vice versa, of transportation priorities in their respective regions and to coordinate inter-regional transportation projects. It is the intent of the New Hampshire MPOs to coordinate their transportation planning activities on an ongoing basis. To encourage this coordination, the staffs of the MPOs meet from time to time to share information and coordinate their activities in such areas as modeling, financial constraint, long range plan and TIP development, corridor planning and other matters.

4.10 Pease Development Authority (Including former NH Port authority)

The Pease Development Authority (PDA) was created by an act of the state legislature in June of 1990 to "...implement the Pease Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan." State and local interests are represented on the authority's board of directors, a policy-making body which consists of seven members.

The PDA is responsible for enhancing the economic viability of the New Hampshire's seacoast region by bringing industry and jobs to the former Pease Air Force Base, now called the Pease International Trade Port. This area is generally bound by the New Hampshire and Maine state border to the east, Exit 6 of the Spaulding Turnpike and the Scammell Bridge on Route 4 to the north, the easterly shore of the Great Bay to the west and Interstate 95 and the U.S. 1 Bypass to the south. The Tradeport is a major intermodal hub in the metropolitan area, having access to I-95, a major airport facility, a rail line (inactive) and a seaport.

The PDA is guided by an overall mission, which is "...To capitalize on the unique opportunities the Pease facility affords for economic benefit, while preserving New Hampshire's quality of life and environment."

Because of the Tradeport's significance as both a provider and consumer of transportation facilities, the Pease Development Authority has been included in the MPO process since the early 1990s. Throughout 1992-93, MPO staff worked closely with a consultant on the development of a Pease Surface Transportation Master Plan and travel demand model. The Study provided transportation planning and preliminary engineering recommendations to support the development of the Pease International Trade Port. It has been update twice since that time and the MPO has been invited to provide input in each case.

The Pease Development Authority has voting representation on both the Rockingham MPO Policy and Technical Advisory Committees.

The Port of New Hampshire is located on the Piscataqua River along the Maine state border. It is the

only deep water, year-round, ice free port in the United States north of Boston, and has served as a gateway for marine transportation and shipping for over 300 years. The Port extends from the mouth of the Portsmouth Harbor to Newington Point at the General Sullivan Bridge. With close proximity to Interstate 95 and direct service from rail lines and the Pease International Tradeport, it has large potential as an intermodal link for shipping and receiving international cargo. The former New Hampshire State Port Authority was administratively merged into the Pease Development Authority in 2001. It presently operates as a Division of Ports and Harbors within the PDA. The Port Authority has a broad mission related to the development and management of the state's tidal waters including: Harbor Management; Port Development; Port Marketing and Trade Development; and Foreign Trade Zone Operation. The Division has representation on the MPO Policy and Technical Advisory Committees through the Pease Development Authority.

Representation on the MPO enables the PDA to represent the transportation and intermodal facility needs and priorities of both the Tradeport and the Port and to provide guidance to the MPO in the development of the Long Range Plan and TIP.

4.11 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) have non-voting representation on the Technical Advisory and Policy Committees. Their responsibilities include: (1) providing funds (FHWA PL and FTA Section 5303 planning funds), through the NHDOT, to support of the 3Cs transportation planning process; (2) to provide input and advice to the MPO staff, TAC and Policy Committees through attendance at MPO meeting and through the review and comment on work products; (3) providing guidance regarding interpretation and fulfillment of federal metropolitan transportation planning rules and requirements; and (4) to make the joint air quality conformity findings of the Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program. The FHWA actively participates and takes the lead in coordinating meetings of the Interagency Consultation Group.

4.12 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has the responsibility to comment on the technical merits of the air quality conformity determination made for the Regional Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program and to review the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) projects recommended for implementation in the region. The EPA actively participates in coordinating meetings of the NH Interagency Consultation Group.

4.13 University of New Hampshire - Durham

The University of New Hampshire (UNH) is a significant provider of public transportation services in the Seacoast region through the UNH Wildcat Transit service and because of this was an active participant in the former Seacoast MPO process, with representation on the Policy and TAC committees. While Wildcat has a much smaller service base in the Rockingham MPO area (Portsmouth and Newington), because UNH also manages the Durham rail station on Amtrak's Portland-Boston Downeaster service and has considered possible future transit connections in the NH 125 corridor, the new MPO Policy and TAC structure maintains voting membership for UNH. This will be reevaluated from time to time based on the University's continued interest in participating. As a non-municipality, UNH plays a role similar to other agencies listed in this section. Representation on the MPO acknowledges the University's effect on land use and travel demand of the region, and well as its role as an existing transit provider.

5.0 DEVELOPMENT AND AMENDMENT OF THE LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

5.1 Background

The MPO transportation planning process consists of a number of interrelated elements and actions. The purpose of this section is to describe these and explain how the MPO will develop and amend the Transportation Plan and TIP.

The core elements of the planning process are as they have been in the past: development and update of a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and a short range Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the region. Integral to both of these are three other key elements: (1) the determination of conformity for both the Plan and the TIP to the State Implementation Plan (SIP) for Air Quality; (2) the consideration of financial constraints in the development of the Plan and TIP, and (3) the use of an effective public involvement process throughout the development stages of the Plan and TIP.

The requirements for developing Plans and TIPs are defined by SAFETEA-LU and its implementing rules (Metropolitan Planning Rules - 23 CFR 450; Statewide Planning Rules - 23 CFR 500, and EPA Conformity Rules - 40 CFR 51). In particular, key changes have been made regarding the content and interrelationship of the Transportation Plan and TIP such that the Transportation Plan is now intrinsic to the MPO's planning efforts and the resulting TIP. SAFETEA-LU has also brought about significant changes in terms of timelines for Plan and TIP development, public involvement requirements, and coordination and consultation requirements with other regional and state agencies in the development MPO planning documents.

The Seacoast MPO implements and maintains a transportation planning process based on the provisions of 23 CFR Part 450 and related requirements. This process addresses the overall transportation planning goals established in ISTEA and TEA21 (The "7 Factors") and further revised under SAFETEA-LU, and includes a public involvement component consistent and includes full documentation of the region's Transportation Plan, TIP and related elements.

5.2 Development of the Long Range Transportation Plan

5.2.1 Plan Requirements

The requirements for the development of a Transportation Plan are spelled out in section 450.306 of the Metropolitan Planning Rules (23 CFR 450). Some of the key requirements for the Transportation Plan that have evolved with the passage of ISTEA, TEA-21 and SAFETEA-LU, as well as the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1991 are the following:

- the Plan must have a **20 year horizon** (except in some circumstances which are not applicable to the Seacoast MPO);
- the Plan must be **project specific**, not merely a goal oriented plan;
- the Plan must include a **financial plan** component which identifies the amount of funding reasonably expected to be available to implement the projects identified;
- the Plan must **conform** to the State Implementation Plan for Air Quality (SIP), based a **quantitative analysis** of the combined affect of implementing the projects identified in

the Plan;

- the Plan must address each of the applicable **SAFETEA-LU Required Elements ("8 Factors")** (See listing in Appendix A);
- the Plan must include the projected demand of persons and goods in the metropolitan planning area of the period of the transportation plan;
- the Plan must show existing and proposed transportation facilities that should function as an integrated metropolitan transportation system; it must be **consistent with ITS architectures** defined for the state or region;
- the Plan must be developed in **consultation with state and local agencies** for environmental protection, wildlife management, land management, and historic preservation as well as Tribal governments, as applicable;
- the Plan should refer directly to the goals and objectives of the **Strategic Highway Safety Plan**;
- the Plan must coordinated with and be consistent with the **Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan** for the region;
- the Plan must include a discussion of the types and location of potential **environmental mitigation activities**;
- the Plan must address operational and management strategies to improve the performance of existing transportation facilities, relieve congestion, and maximize the safety and mobility of people and goods;
- the Plan must include both **long-range and short-range strategies** and actions that lead to the development of an integrated intermodal transportation system;
- the Plan must be **reviewed and updated at least every four years** (in non-attainment and maintained areas); and
- the Plan must be developed with early and effective opportunities for **public involvement** (See Section 6.0).

Other requirements call for the Plan to: include projections of transportation demand for various modes over the period of the Plan using up-to-date land use and population forecasts and travel demand modeling systems; identify adopted (and planned) congestion management strategies; identify (and plan for) pedestrian and bicycle facilities; incorporate relevant information from the State's six transportation management systems if developed by the NHDOT (congestion, pavement, bridge, safety, public

transportation and intermodal facilities); assess capital investment and operational needs to preserve and make optimum use of existing transportation facilities; include a multimodal evaluation of the affect of the overall Plan, especially regarding proposed major transportation investments; include consideration of the region's long-range land use, economic development and other related plans.

In order to accommodate the broad requirements of the Plan in relation to staffing and resources of the MPO, the Plan was developed and maintained in several components so as to allow the phasing of its development. The major components of the Plan include:

- goals and policies;
- demographics and forecasts;
- highways and bridges,
- transit
- bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- travel demand management
- freight transportation
- land use and transportation,
- long and short range project priorities.

The required financial and conformity analyses are integral to the plan as well.

5.2.2 Transportation Plan and MPO Study Area

The Transportation Plan is required to cover the defined study area of the MPO. The study area ordinarily covers the "metropolitan area" or urbanized area. However, it must also cover the non-attainment area within the MPO. Since all communities in the RPC are classified within the Southern New Hampshire 8 hour non-attainment area, the 27 town RPC region and the MPO study area are one in the same.

See Figure 1.

5.2.3 Financial Plan

The financial plan component of the overall Plan must demonstrate that proposed transportation improvements are consistent with available and projected sources of revenue. The Plan therefore includes an analysis which compares existing and projected revenue sources which are reasonably expected, with the estimated costs of constructing, acquiring, and operating the total transportation system over the period of the plan (20 years). Where shortfalls are projected to exist, proposed new sources are identified or the Plan was modified to eliminate expenditures.

Because New Hampshire does not at this time provide fixed or formula based sub-state allocations for any portion of STP funds (with the exception of PL funds for planning), the MPO is not in the position to make an independent determination of fiscal constraint. Instead, the MPO relies on information of expected project expenditures from the 10 year Plan and supplements this information with internally generated estimates based upon historical share of expenditures in the region. In order to fulfill the requirements of SAFETEA-LU (23 CFR 450 324(g)(10) for the development of financial plans we anticipate working more closely with the NHDOT, COAST, CART and other NH MPOs to develop common methods and procedures for preparing the assumptions necessary to prepare the financial plan.

Because the MPO is a non-attainment area, the financial plan carries an additional requirement to address specific financial strategies that may be required to ensure the implementation of projects and programs necessary to reach air quality attainment.

5.2.4 Project-Specific Requirements

Regarding the requirement that Transportation Plans be "project specific," the metropolitan planning rules specify that the Plan must include sufficient detail regarding the design concept and scope of on projects to permit conformity determination under the EPA conformity regulations (40 CFR 51). In general, this means that a design concept must be identified for each project. Also, in order to fulfill the financial planning requirements, the concept must be identified in sufficient detail to develop cost estimates.

5.2.5 Plan Development Schedule

In accordance with SATETEA-LU, the MPO must review and update the transportation plan at least every four (4) years in air quality non-attainment (and maintenance) areas. Updates must, at a minimum confirm the validity and consistency of the Plan's major assumptions regarding forecasted land use and transportation assumptions for the region. To maintain consistency with the State's two year update cycle of the 10 Year Plan, it is anticipated that the MPO will as needed update the project-specific aspects of the Plan every two years. Such shorter term updates will be timed so as to occur concurrently with the biennial TIP development process (See Section 5.3).

5.3 Development of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

5.3.1 TIP Requirements

As previously noted, the Transportation Improvement Program is closely integrated with the Long Range Transportation Plan, and serves as the short range "capital improvements plan" for the Long range Plan. The content of the TIP is drawn from the specific recommendations of the Plan.

The requirements of TIP development are spelled out in Sections 450.324-330 of the Metropolitan Planning Rules. The key requirements for both the development process and content are summarized as follows:

- TIP development must occur as part of the 3Cs process, and in cooperation with the State and public transit operator.
- The TIP must be updated at least every two years and approved by the MPO Policy Committee and the Governor; the update schedule must be compatible with the STIP development/approval process.
- The TIP must be developed with early and effective opportunities for public involvement, and must include at least one formal public meeting (See Section 6.0 for specific requirements);
- The TIP must cover a period of not less than three years; additional years may be included, but only if they include information about cost, funding sources and priority. Within the first three years, the TIP must prioritize projects at least by year;
- If Transportation Control Measure (TCM) projects become part of the NH SIP in the future, the TIP must give priority to these projects to ensure their timely implementation;

- The TIP must be financially constrained and include a financial plan component which identifies which projects can be implemented with existing sources and which will utilize proposed sources, if any;
- The TIP may only include projects that are consistent with the transportation plan; and
- The TIP must include all transportation projects to be implemented within the MPO study area that are proposed for funding under title 23 USC and the Federal Transit Act.

5.3.2 TIP Content (23 CFR 450.324)

The TIP must include the following project types:

- A. All capital and non-capital transportation projects within the MPO study area proposed for federal funding on Title 23 or the Federal Transit Act, including TE, CMAQ, safety, trails, and bicycle and pedestrian projects;
- B. Only projects that are consistent with (interpreted to mean contained within) the project-specific recommendations of the transportation plan; and
- C. All *regionally significant* transportation projects for which:
 - 1. FHWA or FTA approval is required, regardless of funding source;
 - 2. For informational purposes and air quality analysis, any project proposed to be funded with federal funds; and
 - 3. For informational purposes and for air quality analysis, any project to be funded with non-federal funds.

For projects included in the TIP, descriptive information is included which identifies: project cost; federal funding to be used in each programmed year, source of funding, both federal and other; the funding recipient and agency responsible for implementation; whether or not the project is a TCM identified in the NHSIP; a project which implements ADA Paratransit plans. The information presented will be of sufficient detail, in terms of project design, scope and timing to conduct quantitative air quality analysis in accordance with EPA conformity requirements (40 CFR 51).

The TIP may only include projects, or phase of a project if full funding of that project or phase is reasonably anticipated to be available within the time period contemplated for completion of the project or phase.

5.3.3 Financial Plan

The financial plan component of the TIP must demonstrate that the TIP is **financially constrained**, by year. The financial plan for the TIP is based on information provided by the NHDOT (and by COAST and CART for transit components of the TIP) indicating funds, by funding source and category, that are reasonably expected to be available and committed for the projects in the TIP for each year of the four year program.

Based on the results of the financial analysis, projects for which operating and construction funds cannot be reasonably expected to be available must be omitted. Funding sources to be considered include Title 23, FTA, Transportation Enhancement (TE) and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ), STP Flexible Funds, local and State sources, and private sector sources. Proposed new funding sources are not considered unless there is a reasonable expectation that the funds will be available to implement the projects.

5.3.4 Project Selection Criteria

Prior to the first full TIP update cycle following the release of the final Metropolitan Planning Rules, the MPO developed and adopted explicit TIP selection criteria. The criteria identify the rational basis by which the MPO prioritizes projects for Plan/TIP selection. The adoption or amendment to the selection criteria will be made subject to a public involvement process as identified in Section 6.4.2 of this document.

5.3.5 Relationship to STIP

The Metropolitan Planning Rules require that the TIP, if adopted by the MPO and approved by the Governor, be included without modification in the State TIP (STIP). Prior to inclusion in the STIP, the FTA and FHWA must find that TIP conforms to the NH State Implementation Plan (SIP) for Air Quality. Under the State's proposed TIP/STIP development process, the NHDOT receives an adopted draft TIP which becomes subject to revision by the NHDOT, the Governor, Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT), and the State Legislature. Subsequent to final action by the Legislature, the MPO will be asked to adopt a final TIP which may include changes to the adopted draft not considered or approved by the MPO. The MPO will review the final draft for such changes and adopt it, if the determination is made that:

- A. The TIP continues to conform with NH SIP;
 - B. The TIP remains financially constrained;
 - C. The projects selected are consistent with and supported by the MPO project selection criteria; and
 - D. The TIP reflects the project specific content of the adopted MPO Transportation Plan and the region's transportation improvement priorities.
- (See also 5.2.8 - TIP Development Schedule and Process)

5.3.6 FHWA and FTA Required Actions on the TIP

The MPO, independently of the State, will forward copies of the TIP following their adoption or amendment by the Policy Committee and approval by the Governor. Final approval of the TIP will be contingent on joint FHWA/FTA findings which affirms that:

- A. The TIP is based on the 3Cs transportation process carried out jointly by the MPO, State and transit operators; and
- B. The TIP conforms with the adopted NH SIP, and that project priority has been given to the timely implementation of TCMs which may be incorporated in the SIP in the future.

5.3.7 Monitoring Progress in Implementation; Annual Listing of Obligated Projects

The TIP document prepared by the MPO will identify major projects that have been significantly delayed and reasons for those delays to the extent that they can be determined. In addition, on an annual basis the MPO will develop a listing of projects for which FHWA and FTA funds (Title 23 and 49) were obligated in the preceding program year. This listing will be based on information supplied by the NHDOT, contain similar project information as found in the TIP, and will be published on the MPO website, with public notice provided in accordance with the MPO public participation process (See Section 7).

5.3.8 TIP Development Schedule and Process

TIP development happens on a two year cycle, though changes may be made to the TIP outside of the regular development/adoption cycle, and are referred to as **TIP Amendments**. As previously noted, because TIP projects shown for the first three years must be drawn from the project specific recommendations of the Plan, the Plan and TIP were developed concurrently, with the TIP being the short-range recommendations chapter of the Plan.

Table 2 below outlines the sequence of events that are expected to occur during the development of the biennial TIP. The dates shown are contingent and dependent on the required information and precedents being in-place in the expected timeframe. (See also Figure 4)

5.4 Plan and TIP Amendments

The adopted Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program may be modified during the interim period between biennial updates, provided that the modifications are consistent with applicable Metropolitan Planning and SIP Conformity rules. Interim period modifications to the Plan or TIP shall be termed **amendments**. Since the TIP contains projects that are drawn from the Plan and must remain fully consistent with the Plan, amendments to the TIP may also incorporate a parallel amendment to the project specific elements of the Plan.

In December 2007, the NHDOT, MPOs NHDES, FHWA and FTA jointly developed new guidelines and procedures for processing TIP amendments entitled Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Revision Procedures (Draft dated December 18, 2007). The relevant section of these procedures are incorporated in **Section 6** of this Prospectus and supersede the previous amendment procedures used by the MPO.

5.5 Air Quality Conformity Determinations

As previously described in Section 3.6, the MPO may not adopt or amend a Plan or TIP that does not conform with the State's adopted plan for reaching air quality attainment -- the State Implementation Plan (SIP). In general, to be conforming, the Plan and TIP must not cause new air quality violations or worsen existing violations, and must not exceed the non-attainment area budget for mobile source emissions (for VOCs or NOx) established in the approved State Implementation Plan for Air Quality Attainment (SIP).

**TABLE 2
TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

YEAR ONE (even-numbered years)

Timeframe	Event/Action
September	MPO publishes public notice of intent to update the Plan and TIP. MPO requests financial planning information from NHDOT (See Section 6.3.2 regarding notice).
September-October	MPO distributes current project selection criteria and procedures and solicits projects for the TIP from participating agencies and MPO communities regarding transportation needs in the region. MPO solicits interested parties to participate in public advisory committee if one is to be established (See Section 6.3.3).
October-January	MPO staff prepares Draft Plan and TIP, based on agency advisory committee and public input and on results from travel demand model analyses, air quality analyses, management system inputs, and financial assumptions. Includes draft air quality conformity determination. Public informational meetings held during draft development - per Section 6.3.4.
January	MPO Distributes Draft Plan and TIP Update to TAC for review and endorsement at February meeting.
February	MPO publishes/posts notice of availability of draft document and public hearing for 30-day public comment period; distributes copies of draft widely in the region (See Section 6.3.5); and prepares and distributes summary materials to interested parties. TAC reviews/endorse Draft or recommends revisions. (Additional TAC meetings if required).
March	Policy Committee holds public hearing on Draft Plan and TIP to present the document(s) and take public input. At close of public comment period, MPO staff review public input and prepare summary of comments and Final TIP. Policy Committee holds meeting at end of month to adopt revised Plan and TIP. If further revisions are required, Policy Committee schedules subsequent meeting at which TIP can be adopted.

TABLE 2 - *continued*
TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

YEAR TWO (*odd-numbered years*)

Timeframe	Event/Action
April 1 - 15	Adopted TIP is submitted to NHDOT for draft STIP development.
April - July	NHDOT develops updated State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) from MPO/RPA draft TIPs; submission to GACIT.
July - December	GACIT holds hearings on STIP and submits final version to Governor.
January 15	Governor submits STIP, with amendments if any, to Legislature.
June 1	Legislature passes and submits version of STIP to NHDOT.
June - Weeks 1&2	NHDOT divides STIP by MPO or region and submits to MPO for final TIP endorsement. MPO analyzes Seacoast MPO component of STIP against MPO approved Draft Plan and TIP, and reviews it to determine consistency with the Plan and conformity with the SIP.
June - Weeks 3&4	MPO distributes STIP-derived MPO TIP to TAC and publishes/posts notice of availability of revised plan(s); start of public comment period.
July	TAC meets to endorse revised TIP.
July	Comment period closes
August submits to	MPO Policy Committee meets to adopt revised Final TIP and if adopted NHDOT and to FHWA/FTA.

All amendments to the Plan and TIP that involve changes to “non-exempt” surface transportation projects are subject to quantitative conformity determinations using project level information. Conformity emissions analysis must be made for the entire non-attainment area and include all mobile source emissions, not limited to the emissions for individual projects. Because the New Hampshire non-attainment area covers parts or all of four MPOs, conformity determinations are not determined individually by MPO but through a coordinated process involving all MPOs, the NHDOT and NHDES – Air Resources Division. As previously described, the process and agency responsibilities to be adhered to in conformity determinations are specifically defined in the New Hampshire Transportation Conformity administrative rules (PART Env-A 1501 TRANSPORTATION CONFORMITY).

6.0 TIP AMENDMENT PROCEDURES

6.1 Overview

The NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT), through cooperation and coordination with the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) and the rural Regional Planning Commissions (RPC), maintains the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). To comply with Federal rules the MPO area Transportation Improvement Plans (TIPs) and the NHDOT STIP must be consistent with one another. The approved STIP is frequently revised to reflect changes in project status; therefore, before the STIP is revised to reflect a project change in an MPO area, the MPO TIP must first be revised. Changes in project schedules, funding needs, and project scopes require revising the approved STIP.

These changes may be initiated by the NHDOT, MPO, or public transit agency in the region. Depending upon their significance and complexity, the completion of the revision will require coordination from several agencies and Federal approval. To assist with coordinating the process of TIP and STIP revisions and amendments, an interagency consultation process has been established which includes the NHDOT Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES), MPOs and RPCs. The process is intended to address and coordinate issues relating to MPO public comments and participation periods, statewide comment periods, financial constraint and air quality conformity determinations.

The procedure for formally amending the MPO TIP and the New Hampshire STIP differs depending on the nature of the proposed amendment. Through Interagency Consultation, criteria have been developed describing the thresholds and triggers that will define what type of action is required to make a revision to the TIP or STIP. As described in 23 CFR 450 there are two types of revisions to an approved TIP: an **Amendment** and an **Administrative Modification**. Following are the thresholds or events that trigger the necessity for an amendment and the provisions that would allow for an administrative modification. A third category of change, **Information Only**, has been included in this process to facilitate the exchange of information and an expedited process when specific minor changes are made to projects within the STIP. To help ensure that the STIP remains financially constrained as revisions are made, the NHDOT will be responsible for balancing the net effect of project changes and provide supporting financial constraint documentation.

6.1.1 Definitions

Revision: Any change to a project within the STIP.

STIP Update: A process undertaken on a biennial basis in NH to publish a new STIP that

includes all relevant project information for a period of 4 years.

Amendment: The highest tier of a revision requiring a public comment period, interagency consultation, adoption by NHDOT and/or approval by the MPO, approval by FHWA/FTA, and a finding of conformity.

Administrative Modification: The middle tier of a revision requiring interagency consultation, approval by NHDOT and/or by a designee of the MPO, and notification of FHWA/FTA.

Information Only: The lowest tier of a revision requiring interagency consultation and approval by NHDOT and/or by a designee of the MPO.

Expedited Project Selection Procedures: A process outlined in federal rules that permits a change in the years of implementation of a project. For the urban areas of a state, each MPO, if they wish to utilize these expedited procedures, must adopt them as part of their prospectus. Under these procedures, this type of change falls into the Information Only tier of revision.

Regionally Significant: A determination discussed through interagency consultation, made by the MPO or the State, and documented in a TIP, Conformity Document, and/or other Plan. Federal rules generally define regionally significant projects to include those that serve regional transportation needs, specifically identifying principal arterials. Most revisions made to a designated Regionally Significant project will qualify as Amendments.

Air Quality Conformity Determination: Required under federal rules for areas that are classified as non-attainment or in maintenance of national ambient air quality standards. The Determination certifies that the area meets criteria pollution limits defined in the NH Statewide Implementation Plan.

Air Quality Analysis: The process to identify and document the anticipated effects of a project on air quality.

Illustrative Purposes: Projects that are unofficially included in the STIP in anticipation of the receipt of federal funds. Until the projects are officially added, either through an Amendment or an Administrative Modification, they are not included in financial constraint information. For several federal programs, including earmarks and other special categories, funds are often not obligated until near the end of the fiscal year creating situations where, if a traditional amendment was needed, the funds could not be spent until the next fiscal year and would likely require an additional amendment.

Phase: A component of a project defined as Preliminary Engineering (P), Right of Way (R), or Construction (C) programmed with a dollar amount and a fiscal year.

6.2 Decision Thresholds

The following thresholds were established by NHDOT in consultation with the MPO and rural RPCs, FHWA, FTA, EPA, and NHDES. The intent of setting these thresholds is to establish a transparent and consistent decision making process for how changes to projects within the STIP will be managed. For changes to the cost of projects, a sliding scale is outlined in **Table 3** to determine which category of revision is required. All measurements for these cost changes will be made from the last approved STIP to account for incremental changes.

6.2.1 Amendment

- Any change to a project that impacts the Air Quality Analysis used for the current Conformity Determination;
- Adding or removing a regionally significant project;
- Adding or removing a federally funded project;
- Making a change in the scope of work of a project that uses state or federal funds or of any regionally significant projects regardless of the funding source;
- A significant change in the total cost of a project (Table 3);
- A change in the fiscal year of any phase of a project in areas where expedited project selection procedures have not been adopted.

6.2.2 Administrative Modification

- A moderate change in the total cost of a project (Table 3);
- Adding or removing a non-regionally significant project that had been included for illustrative purposes;
- Combining or separating two or more projects;
- Combining or separating phases within a project;
- Identifying a specific project that was part of a general statewide project and adjusting the statewide project accordingly;

6.2.3 Information Only

- A change in the fiscal year of any phase of a project in areas where expedited project selection procedures have been adopted, provided they are advanced or delayed within the STIP years;
- Adding projects for illustrative purposes only in anticipation of federal or other funds;
- A minor change in the total cost of a project (Table 3);
- Minor technical corrections, such as typographic errors or missing data.

6.3 Interagency Consultation

Before a TIP or STIP revision can be adopted by the MPO or NHDOT or recommended for approval by FHWA/FTA, and prior to the start of any public comment period for the amendment, the proposed changes, whether initiated from the MPO or the NHDOT, will be discussed through interagency consultation meetings/phone conferences or correspondence. This review includes all projects eligible for amendments, administrative modifications, and most information only changes. Representatives from FHWA, FTA, EPA, NHDOT, NHDES, MPOs, and RPCs in the attainment area are invited to participate in monthly discussions. Any public input that has been received should be expressed through the planning commission staff in attendance or by the agencies.

**Table 3
Project Cost Thresholds**

Total Cost of Project within approved STIP Years	Full Amendment	Administrative Modification	Information Only
	<i>Action Needed if the Change in Cost from the amount approved in the most current STIP is:</i>		
\$1 Million to \$5 Million	>30%	10% to 30% (\$750k limit)	<20% (\$350k limit)
> \$5 Million to \$10 Million	>20%	10% to 20% (\$1.5 million limit)	<10% (\$500k limit)
> \$10 Million to \$50 Million	>10%	5% to 10% (\$3.5 million limit)	<5% (\$750k limit)
Over \$50 Million	>5%	1% to 5% (\$5 million limit)	<1% (\$1 million limit)

Note: No amendment is needed for projects under \$1 Million provided that the proposed revision does not increase the total cost of the project, within the STIP years, to any amount greater than \$1 Million or by more than 50% of the approved cost.

Through interagency consultation a recommendation will be made regarding each project’s regional significance. At a minimum, that recommendation will meet the standards outlined in 23 CFR 450. Interagency consultation also provides a forum to determine if a proposed revision will impact an associated air quality analysis.

Interagency consultation provides one of the first opportunities for participating agencies, and others involved to view and comment on potential TIP or STIP revisions. Any comments received through the consultation process may affect how the MPO or State elects to categorize the revisions before distributing them for public comment and formal review at the MPO level. In an urbanized area, final categorization is at the discretion of the MPO which may choose to process any lesser revision as a full amendment. Alternatively, if the MPO or State wishes to process a change as a lesser revision than what was agreed to the interagency consultation, (e.g. changing from an Amendment to an Information Only revision) it should be discussed again through the consultation process before proceeding.

6.3.1 Dispute Resolution

When disagreements arise over any aspect of a STIP revision that cannot be satisfactorily and amicably resolved between the immediate parties involved, they will be brought forward for discussion as part of the consultation process. The interagency group may provide guidance to the parties involved in the dispute and to whichever agency(s) have the ultimate approval authority. Any such guidance shall be documented in the meeting minutes. However, while the guidance provided through interagency consultation should weigh heavily on decisions made to resolve the dispute, it is not binding.

6.4 Amendments

Amendments are intended to address major changes to projects or changes, either in scope or cost, that affect air quality conformity. The amendment process also provides an opportunity to process all administrative modifications and information only changes that may have been approved since the previous amendment. Amendments require, at a minimum, a 30-day public comment period, a conformity determination, and subsequent approvals, but may also require a review or update to the air quality analysis. The timeframe to process amendments is likely to be 3 or more months. To the extent possible, amendments to the TIP will be grouped with other amendments to the STIP and processed on a quarterly basis and changes.

Project changes in an MPO area must comply with the provisions of 23 CFR 450.326 pertaining to TIP revisions. Regardless of whether the project change is initiated by the MPO or the NHDOT, the MPO board (Policy Committee) must adopt the amendment to their approved TIP. There must be a public participation process, consistent with the MPO's public participation plan (See Section 7), and a public comment period of at least 30 days. Upon formal endorsement of the amendment at a public MPO meeting, the MPO shall provide a copy of the amendment to the State, FHWA and FTA. Any amendment to the TIP must be accompanied by a corresponding conformity determination by the MPO. That conformity determination, depending upon the discussions through interagency consultation, may or may not require a new air quality analysis.

The State shall incorporate the amendment into the STIP and submit the amended STIP to FHWA/FTA for approval. The NHDOT must demonstrate that the STIP remains financially constrained. Each amendment shall be dated and sequentially numbered. The FHWA/FTA shall approve or disapprove the STIP amendment. If the amendment consists of only highway projects or only transit projects and no conformity determination is required, the FHWA or FTA may approve the amendment unilaterally. Otherwise, approval will be by joint letter. The state will forward copies of the approval to the affected MPOs. The MPO will, in turn, notify the affected Transit Operator(s), if transit projects are involved.

6.5. Administrative Modification

Consistent with the definitions outlined in 23 U.S.C. 101(a) and 49 U.S.C. 5302, the intent of the administrative modification process is to allow, where suitable, relatively small changes to be made to projects in an expedited fashion. Administrative modifications can be made based on the thresholds established in Section 6.2 and in Table 3. The administrative modification option is available for projects at the discretion of the MPO, which may instead opt for the formal amendment process. Unlike in the case of full amendments, the MPO may delegate the approval of modifications to a person or subcommittee.

A list of all the projects that are potentially eligible for administrative modifications will be reviewed through the interagency consultation process. Following that review, each of the affected MPOs and rural planning commissions will receive a list of projects with the proposed changes within their jurisdiction. The NHDOT will certify that the STIP will remain financially constrained after taking into account the proposed project changes and will notify FHWA/FTA of the project changes. Administrative modifications should typically take 1 to 2 months to process.

Accordingly, the Executive Director is hereby given the discretion to approve Administrative Modifications, and to determine when such modification should instead be elevated to full Amendment status. The Executive Director shall issue letters to the NHDOT for each Administrative Amendment indicating concurrence or disapproval of the proposed changes. Copies of all Administrative

Modifications letters issued by the Executive Director shall be provided to members of the TAC and Policy Committees and be reviewed and made part of the record at the subsequent MPO Policy Committee meeting.

The NHDOT will notify the FHWA/FTA of the approval of administrative modifications. The FHWA/FTA shall place these adjustment letters on file with the STIP and the State shall update the STIP to include these modifications periodically as full amendments or STIP updates are processed. If the person or board designated as having approval authority elects not to approve an administrative modification, that change could still be pursued through the full amendment process. FHWA/FTA will review modifications and will accept or not accept them; however, no formal approval will be required.

Changes to projects through this procedure constitute an administrative modification to the STIP and will be processed with future STIP amendments. To ensure consistency with federal regulations regarding air quality conformity, any project that is identified to potentially affect the air quality determination of a non-attainment or maintenance area will be discussed at the interagency consultation.

6.6 Information Only

Changes made through expedited project selection procedures as well as minor changes in project cost consistent with the thresholds established in Table 3 would qualify as *Information Only* changes.

These types of changes will be reported in the STIP as future amendments or STIP updates are processed. Information Only changes to projects will be reviewed through the interagency consultation process except in rare circumstances such as the case of emergency revisions to projects due to an unforeseen need and will be limited to revisions eligible for expedited project selection procedures. The intended timeframe to approve project changes in the Information Only category is approximately 1 month. Unlike in the case of full amendments, an MPO may delegate the approval of information only changes to a person or committee, e.g. the Executive Director or Executive Committee. For the rural areas of NH, the Director of Project Development for NHDOT will have approval authority.

Included in Information Only changes, expedited project selection procedures provide flexibility to advance or delay projects within the STIP provided that there are no impacts to air quality conformity and that the STIP remains financially constrained. A list of all the projects that are potentially eligible for expedited project selection procedures will be reviewed through the interagency consultation process. Following that review, the MPOs will receive from the NHDOT a list of projects with the proposed schedule changes within their jurisdiction.

The RPC/MPO Executive Director is hereby given the discretion to approve Information Only changes, and to determine when such modification should instead be elevated to Administrative Amendment or full Amendment status. The Executive Director shall issue letters to the NHDOT for Information Only changes indicating concurrence or disapproval of the proposed changes. Copies of all approvals for Information Only changes by the Executive Director shall be provided to members of the TAC and Policy Committees and be reviewed and made part of the record at the subsequent MPO Policy Committee meeting.

When MPO approval of the change is received by NHDOT, the approval letter will be included with a submittal to FHWA/FTA as part of the next full amendment or update to the STIP. If approval of the change is not provided by the MPO, the project may be considered for a full STIP amendment, including the more rigorous public involvement and approval requirements. All projects approved through expedited project selection procedures will be included in the financial constraint information

issued as part of STIP amendments or STIP updates.

Changes to projects through this expedited project selection procedure will be considered information only changes to the STIP and will be processed with future STIP amendments or updates. To ensure consistency with federal regulations regarding air quality conformity, any project that is identified to potentially affect the air quality determination of a non-attainment or maintenance area will be discussed at the interagency consultation prior to any changes being made.

6.7 Submission of STIP Updates

STIP amendments for single projects may be accommodated by FHWA/FTA, however, it is strongly suggested that the State bundle projects (including individual TIP amendments) for approval and submit an updated STIP project listing including a group of amendments, administrative modifications, and information only changes on a quarterly basis or less frequently if there have been no changes in the STIP during the previous quarter. This will make for a more rational tracking of the current STIP by the State, the Federal Agencies and the MPOs. Each amendment request shall be dated and sequentially numbered and three copies submitted to FHWA and one copy to FTA.

6.8 Air Quality Conformity

Any changes that will potentially trigger conformity are discussed and explored by the participating agencies through the interagency consultation process allowing potential impacts to be identified early in the revision process.

If the proposed revision to the STIP will impact the existing air quality analysis, a new conformity determination and a full STIP amendment is required. Any revisions to the air quality analysis require an amendment of the MPO Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The new air quality analysis shall be developed and amended into the RTP (consultation and public notice procedures apply). The amended TIP conformity determination would then be based on the amended RTP air quality analysis. The STIP amendment, the supporting RTP, and a statement of finding of conformity will then be submitted to FHWA/FTA for approval. The FHWA/FTA approval letter will reflect approval of this new conformity determination.

If the proposed revision to the STIP does not affect the existing air quality analysis, but triggers a determination of conformity for other reasons, it shall be explicitly reflected in the amendment with a statement that the finding of conformity is being based on the existing air quality analysis.

7.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

[The following has been superseded by Public Involvement Plans adopted by the Seacoast and SPW MPOs in 2007 prior to the redesignation of the MPOs. These will be aggregated and presented for re-adoption by the MPO]

7.1 Purpose and Objectives

The Metropolitan Planning Rules adopted under ISTEA and TEA21 contain specific minimum requirements for public involvement in transportation planning.

Every Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) must develop, adopt and implement formalized procedures for effective community participation to be used during the development or updating of a Long Range Transportation Plan (Plan) or Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The following pages define these procedures for the Seacoast MPO. The process described herein is intended to ensure effective public involvement in the MPO's transportation planning activities and to comply with applicable federal rules, including 23 CFR 450.316(b).

The principal objectives of the MPO's public involvement processes are:

- 7.1.1 To actively seek out input and involvement from a wide variety of individuals, groups and organizations affected by the transportation system.
- 7.1.2 To establish effective public involvement early in the planning process, before key decisions are made and while there is ample opportunity to affect decisions.
- 7.1.3 To promote informed public input into decision making by providing timely access to needed information.
- 7.1.4 To fully consider and respond to public input.
- 7.1.5 To result in transportation plans, programs and projects which reflect local, regional and state priorities and needs; and which consider a range of transportation options and consider the overall social, economic, energy and environmental effect of transportation decisions.

7.2 Performance Criteria for Public Involvement

The Federal rules governing metropolitan planning for transportation specify minimum standards which the MPO's public involvement process must achieve (23 CFR 450.316(b)(i-xi)). These requirements form the basis of the criteria that will guide the MPO in carrying out its public involvement process. That process must comply with the following standards, and in addition, must follow the specific procedures for Plan and TIP development as identified in Sections 6.3, 6.4 and 6.5 of this document.

- 7.2.1 Provide a minimum public comment period of 45 days before the public involvement process is initially adopted or amended.
- 7.2.2 Provide timely information about transportation issues and processes to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, private providers of transportation, and other interested parties and segments of the community affected by transportation

plans, programs and projects.

- 7.2.3 Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of Plans and TIPs and open public meetings where matters related to the federal-aid highway and transit programs are being considered.
- 7.2.4 Require a minimum of 30 days public notice for public review and comment at key decision points, including, but not limited to, approval of Plans and TIPs. A lesser lead time is permitted for public informational meetings per Section 6.3.4 of this document. Public notice requirements will be carried out prior to key decision points.
- 7.2.5 Provide timely notice of public involvement opportunities, including posting of notices in public places and direct notification of interested parties identified in the process.
- 7.2.6 Seek out and consider the needs of those who are commonly under-served by existing transportation systems, including households with low income, individuals with disabilities, and members of minority groups.
- 7.2.7 Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to the public input received during the planning, program development public hearing processes.
- 7.2.8 Provide the opportunity for additional public comment, prior to adoption, whenever substantive changes are made to a proposed draft Plan or TIP after it is released for public comment.
- 7.2.9 Coordinate the MPO public involvement process with statewide public involvement process wherever possible to enhance public consideration and understanding of the issues, plans, and programs and to reduce redundancies and costs.
- 7.2.10 Review and self-certify, on a biennial basis, that this public involvement process is being followed and is effective in meeting the purpose, objectives and criteria set forth herein, and that it provides full and open access to all.
- 6.2.11 Ensure that all meetings concerning MPO business development be open to the public and held in accessible locations that can accommodate the needs of the disabled, and that the provisions of RSA 91-A ("Access to Public Records and Meetings") are followed.

7.3 Public Involvement Procedures for the Development of the Transportation Plan

During the development or updating of the MPO's Transportation Plan, the following elements and procedures shall be utilized as part of the public involvement process:

7.3.1 Establish Contact List of Interested and Affected Parties

The MPO shall develop and maintain a list of interested and affected parties whose input will be actively sought in the Plan development process. This list will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Boards of selectmen and city councils from study area communities;
- Planning boards, traffic safety committees, public works officials/road agents;
- Public and private transit and taxi operators, including public and private demand responsive

- operators;
- Human service agencies with low income, elderly and disabled clients;
 - Representatives from adjoining MPOs;
 - Traffic safety and enforcement agencies;
 - Chambers of commerce; economic development organizations;
 - Members of the state legislature representing study area communities;
 - Appropriate state and federal agencies, including the NHDOT (including divisions/bureaus of Planning, Rail & Transit, and Aeronautics), NHDES-Air Resources, DRED, Pease Development Authority, FHWA, FTA, FAA, EPA;
 - Individuals and groups with a demonstrated interest in transportation issues;
 - Major businesses and business and industry associations;
 - Schools and colleges;
 - Transportation and highway user groups;
 - Neighborhood associations;
 - Those underserved by the transportation system; and
 - Existing members of the MPO Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Committee not otherwise listed.

Contacts from newspapers, radio, TV (broadcast and local-access cable) media will also be included on the list.

This list will be used to keep individuals, groups and agencies informed about the development of the Transportation Plan and to notify them about specific opportunities for public involvement. The MPO will review and update the list of interested parties on a periodic basis and at least at the start of the biennial Plan/TIP development cycle.

7.3.2 Public Notification of Transportation Plan Development

The MPO shall provide notice to the public of the intent to develop or update the Plan at the start of the development process. This notice shall be published in at least one newspaper of general circulation in the region, posted in the Town or City Halls of each community in the study area, and sent to those interested groups and agencies included on the list of interested and affected parties. The MPO shall endeavor to reach those potentially interested in the Plan's development using appropriate means which may include, but are not limited to: newsletters, new releases, newspaper inserts, windshield flyers, utility bill inserts, bulletin boards, transit distribution, public service advertisements, and local cable TV access programming.

The notice shall include at least the following information: a brief description of the anticipated planning process and action to be taken; how the Plan may affect the region; a general schedule of the Plan development or amendment; an explanation of what opportunities there will be for public comment and participation, and an MPO contact for obtaining further information.

7.3.3 Transportation Plan Advisory Committee

The MPO, at its discretion, may establish an Advisory Committee to provide technical and policy guidance to staff in the development of the draft Plan. The Advisory Committee will be citizen-based and function in an advisory capacity to the TAC, the Policy Committee, and the staff. The purposes of the Advisory Committee are to: 1) assist the staff in identifying transportation system deficiencies and potential solutions; 2) provide interested and affected parties an opportunity for direct involvement in the development of the Plan; and 3) act as a conduit of information to and from broader community and

agency interests.

If an Advisory Committee is established it shall be the responsibility of the MPO to ensure that it includes balanced representation from a variety of transportation interests. If a separate Advisory Committee is not established, the TAC and Policy Committee shall actively serve in an advisory capacity to the staff during the Plan's development. The MPO staff shall provide information to the Advisory Committee (or to the TAC and Policy Committee if none) in the form of handouts, summaries, draft plan sections, presentations and other means to facilitate their informed input into the process.

7.3.4 Public Informational/Discussion Meetings

At appropriate points during the development of the Plan, the MPO will hold public informational meetings to discuss aspects of the Plan, including transportation system deficiencies, alternative solutions, project priorities and other issues as appropriate. At least one such public informational meeting will be held to initiate the Plan development process and for the purpose of collecting, in an informal setting, opinions and ideas for the Plan. A 30-day public notice shall be provided for this initial meeting.

Public notice for these meetings shall be published in at least one newspaper of general circulation in the region, posted in the Town or City Halls of each community in the study area, and sent to those interested groups and agencies included on the list of interested and affected parties at least 10 days prior to the meeting.

7.3.5 Public Hearing on Draft Plan

Upon completion of the draft Plan, the MPO shall schedule a public hearing on the document. Individuals and organizations identified on the "Interested and Affected Parties" list previously established shall be notified and offered the opportunity to participate in and/or offer comment. The purpose of the hearing will be primarily for the MPO to collect comments regarding the content of the draft Plan.

A public notice of the hearing shall be published, posted and distributed in the manner prescribed in Section 6.3.4 above. The notice should encourage the submission of written comments by those unable to attend the hearing. A comment period of 30 days beginning from the date of the hearing notice shall be provided during which comments may be submitted for consideration. The Draft Plan shall be made available for inspection at the time of the hearing notice. Copies of the Plan shall be made available at accessible locations including the RPC and SRPC offices and in at least four other publicized locations throughout the study area.

At the hearing, the MPO shall present the information developed and receive comments regarding the contents of the draft Plan. A handout should be made available to all meeting attendees, summarizing the contents of the Draft Plan. A brief presentation should be given by the MPO at the meeting/hearing of the methods and results of the evaluation conducted and of the contents of the draft Plan. Comments should be encouraged and MPO staff will document all substantive comments received during the proceedings. All written comments received will, to the extent feasible, be acknowledged in writing.

7.3.6 Preparation of Final Plan

Using the public input gained from the previous steps, the MPO will prepare the final Plan. If substantive written or oral comments are received on the draft Plan, either through the public involvement process or through the interagency consultation process, a summary, analysis, and reporting of

the disposition of those comments shall be included in the final Plan.

If the final Plan will contain substantive changes from the one which was made available for public comment, or raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts, the MPO shall provide an additional duly noticed public comment period on the revised draft Plan of not less than 10 days.

The final Plan shall include documentation and support for its contents, a summary of all public comments received and MPO responses, and the public involvement process implemented in its development. The final Plan must be made available to the public for review. The MPO shall provide one copy of the final Plan to each town/city hall and each public library in the study area and maintain a library of additional copies for lending to interested parties. A public notice of availability shall be distributed to the individuals and organizations on the list of "Interested and Affected Parties."

7.4 Public Involvement Procedure for the Development of the TIP

7.4.1 General

When developing the TIP, the MPO shall follow the same public involvement procedures as described for the Long Range Transportation Plan in Sections 6.3.1 through 6.3.6 above, except that the following additional steps pertaining to project selection criteria shall apply whenever changes in the criteria are proposed.

7.4.2 Development of Project Selection Criteria

The development or substantive change in the MPO's TIP project selection criteria shall be subject to the public hearing process. The initial development of, and subsequent amendments to, the TIP selection criteria shall be accomplished before the start of the biennial TIP development process. Prior to beginning, the MPO shall notify the public of its intention to develop TIP selection criteria and shall hold one or more public informational meeting(s) to gather public opinion on the criteria and selection process should be used. Project selection criteria (which define the process, procedures and criteria which will be used to select projects for the TIP) shall be developed in consultation with the Technical Advisory Committee, the NHDOT, NHDES-Air Resources Division and other agencies and organizations as deemed appropriate. Prior to adoption of new or revised project selection criteria, it shall be subject to public review and comment through the public hearing process and carried out in the same manner as prescribed in Section 6.3.5.

7.4.3 Concurrent Plan and TIP Development

At its discretion, the MPO may choose to develop the TIP concurrently with the Plan. If developed concurrently, no separate public involvement procedures shall be required for the TIP except as specified in Section 6.4.

7.5 Public Involvement Process for Amending Plans and TIPS

By Federal rule, in non-attainment areas, the Long Range Transportation Plan must be updated at least every three years and the TIP must be updated every two years. Whenever amendments to either the Plan or the TIP are proposed during the period between updates, the MPO shall, at a minimum, carry out the following portions of the regular public involvement process:

7.5.1 Public Notice and Public Hearing on Amended Plans and TIPS

The MPO shall schedule a public hearing on any amendment to the Plan or TIP which is proposed. Individuals and organizations identified on the "Interested and Affected Parties" list previously established shall be notified and offered the opportunity to participate in and/or offer comment.

A public notice of the hearing shall be published, posted and distributed in the manner prescribed in Section 6.3.4 above. The notice shall include at least the following information: notice to the public of the intent to amend the Plan or TIP; a brief description or summary of the amendment(s) proposed and actions to be taken; why the amendment is being proposed; an explanation of what opportunities there will be to receive public comment, details of the hearing itself including date, time and location; and an MPO contact for obtaining further information.

A comment period of 30 days beginning from the date of the hearing notice shall be provided during which comments may be submitted for consideration. The draft Plan or TIP amendments shall be made available for inspection at the time of the hearing notice. The information shall be made available at accessible locations including the RPC and SRPC offices and in at least four other publicized locations throughout the study area.

At the hearing, the MPO shall present the amendment(s) and receive comments regarding them. A handout should be made available to all meeting attendees summarizing and explaining the amendment(s). MPO staff will document all substantive comments received during the proceedings. Written comments received will be acknowledged and responded to in the final document.

7.5.2 Preparation of Final Plan or TIP Amendments

If substantive written or oral comments are received on the proposed amendments, either through the public involvement process or through the interagency consultation process, a summary, analysis, and reporting of the disposition of those comments shall be included in the final amendment to the Plan or TIP.

If the final amendment will contain substantive changes from the one which was made available for public comment, or raises new material issues which interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen, the MPO shall hold an additional public hearing (per the provisions of Section 6.5.1) on the revised amendment(s).

The final amendments to the Plan or TIP shall include a summary of all public comments received and MPO responses. The final amendments to the Plan or TIP must be made available to the public. The MPO shall provide one copy to each town or city hall and each public library in the study area and maintain additional copies for lending to interested parties. A public notice of availability shall be published and distributed to the individuals and organizations on the list of "Interested and Affected Parties."

8.0 AMENDMENTS TO THE PROSPECTUS

8.1 Review

The signatories to this Prospectus shall, at least on a biennial basis review the contents of the document to identify changes that should be made to reflect current circumstances. Following review and the preparation of proposed changes, the Prospectus shall be readopted by the signatories.

8.2 Termination; Amendments

In addition, during the interim period between formal review, any signatory may, with 60 days advanced notice provided to the other signatories, terminate the agreement embodied in Sections 1-7 of the Prospectus and request, for cause, that amendment to the Prospectus be made. Following the preparation of the proposed amendments, the Prospectus may be readopted by the signatories.

8.3 Separate Agreements

The interagency agreements contained in Appendix B and Appendix C are considered as separate agreements and are not subject to the termination and amendment provisions specified in this section.

APPENDIX A

**Federally Defined Goals for Metropolitan Transportation Planning:
The 8 Planning Factors SAFETEA-LU**

APPENDIX B-1

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR CONTINUING TRANSPORTATION PLANNING
BETWEEN THE RPC, SRPC, NHDOT AND COAST**

APPENDIX B-2

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR CONTINUING TRANSPORTATION PLANNING
BETWEEN THE RPC, SRPC, NHDOT AND CART**

APPENDIX C

**ADMINISTRATIVE RULE FOR AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY DETERMINATION AND SIP
REVISIONS GOVERNING CONFORMITY DETERMINATIONS OF:
TRANSPORTATION PLAN, PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS**

ENV-A 1500 - TRANSPORTATION CONFORMITY